



United Way  
of Central Indiana

*Addressing today's needs.  
Reducing tomorrow's.®*

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS, UNITED WAY KICK OFF WINTER ASSISTANCE FUND** ***Area Funders Step Up to Ensure Local Residents Who Need Help Most Stay Warm***

INDIANAPOLIS (January 17, 2012) — The City of Indianapolis and United Way of Central Indiana kicked off the 2012 Winter Assistance Fund drive today by accepting nearly \$270,000 from five local donors, putting the fund within roughly \$80,000 of the goal of \$350,000 set by United Way and the City.

“The Winter Assistance Fund traditionally is one of Indianapolis’ great collaborative efforts to support our community’s needs,” said Mayor Greg Ballard. “The generosity of our local companies, foundations and residents will have a dramatic impact.”

Start-up contributions, which put the fund at 76 percent of its goal, include \$100,000 from Citizens Energy Group; \$75,000 from Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust; \$50,000 from Indianapolis Power & Light; \$32,702 from the James Proctor Fund for Aged Men and Women; and \$10,000 from The Indianapolis Foundation, a CICF affiliate. Help with utility bills remains the most sought-after need of callers to Connect2Help’s 2-1-1 line for the past four years, said Christie Gillespie, United Way’s director of agency services. In 2011, it also accounted for 20 percent of unmet needs by callers to 2-1-1.

“Helping people stay in their homes and warm is not only the humane thing, it also is a ‘must’ to avoiding homelessness and its downward spiral,” said Gillespie.

The Winter Assistance Fund is for Marion County residents whose income exceeds guidelines for government energy assistance, yet still have difficulty keeping up with high winter heating bills. Last year, the fund helped 1,376 households, including seniors and families with children, by raising \$325,595 in assistance. Residents may dial 2-1-1 to find the nearest neighborhood community center or township trustee office to apply for help through the Winter Assistance Fund.

Customers of Citizens Energy Group and IPL will receive Winter Assistance Fund contribution envelopes in gas and electric bills, making it easier for individuals to give. Contributions are tax deductible and also may be made online at [www.uwci.org](http://www.uwci.org), or by mailing a check to: **United Way of Central Indiana, Winter Assistance Fund, P.O. Box 660054, Indianapolis, IN, 46266-0054.**

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